

I. Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended): A pinion moveable along a output shaft of a starter assembly, the pinion having comprising:

an inner surface disposed about the output shaft, the inner surface extending to being continuous with an end face of the pinion, wherein the inner surface and the end face are generally perpendicular with each other, the pinion comprising:

a primary edge for moving particles from the shaft as the pinion moves along the output shaft, the primary edge being formed along a length of the inner surface and extending to the end face, the primary edge defining a groove in which the particles are received as the pinion moves along the output shaft, the groove being formed along the length of the inner surface and adjacent the primary edge.

2. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the pinion is a one-piece pinion.

3. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the pinion is rotatably and linearly moveable along the output shaft.

4. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the output shaft is rotatable.

5. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 further comprising a secondary edge for moving the particles from the primary edge, the secondary edge being radially formed on the end face adjacent the primary edge.

6. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the primary edge moves particles from a portion on the output shaft as the pinion moves along the output shaft.

7. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the primary edge is arcuately formed along the inner surface of the pinion.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the inner surface has a plurality of primary edges formed thereon.

10. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 9 wherein the inner surface includes a plurality of grooves, each groove being formed along the length of the inner surface and adjacent each respective primary edge.

11. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the length along which the primary edge is formed includes the entire length of the inner surface.

12. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the length along which the primary edge is formed includes a portion of the length of the inner surface.

13. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the starter pinion is made of a metal.

14. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 1 wherein the pinion includes a barrel portion and a gear portion, the end face and the inner surface being adjacent the gear portion.

15. (Currently Amended): A starter pinion moveable along an output shaft of a starter assembly, the pinion comprising:

an inner surface having a bore formed therethrough, the inner surface being disposed about the output shaft and ~~extending to~~ being continuous with an end face of the pinion, wherein the inner surface and the end face are generally perpendicular with each other; and

a groove for receiving and moving particles along the output shaft as the pinion moves along the output shaft, the groove being formed along a length of the inner surface and extending to the end face, the groove defining a primary cleaning edge formed adjacent the groove along the length of the inner surface [[so]].

16. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 15 further comprising a secondary edge for moving the particles from the primary edge, the secondary edge being radially formed on the end face adjacent the primary edge.

17. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 15 wherein the groove is arcuately formed along the inner surface of the pinion to receive and move particles from a portion on the output shaft as the pinion moves therealong.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 15 wherein the inner surface has a plurality of grooves formed thereon.

20. (Currently Amended): The starter pinion of claim 15 wherein ~~each~~ the groove is formed along the length of the inner surface and adjacent ~~each~~ the primary edge.

21. (Original): The starter pinion of claim 15 wherein the length along which the groove is formed includes the entire length of the inner surface.

22-33. (Cancelled)

34. (New): The starter pinion of claim 15 wherein the pinion is a one-piece pinion.

35. (Cancelled)